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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/603,397	06/25/2003	James A. Peterson	2992.10US04	4852
24113	7590	02/08/2006	EXAMINER	
PATTERSON, THUENTE, SKAAR & CHRISTENSEN, P.A. 4800 IDS CENTER 80 SOUTH 8TH STREET MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-2100			MENDOZA, MICHAEL G	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3731	

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/603,397

Applicant(s)

PETERSON ET AL.

Examiner

Michael G. Mendoza

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 December 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 10-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.
2. Applicant's arguments, see page 7, filed 19 December 2005, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 10-12 under 35 USC 103(a) have been fully considered and are persuasive. The examiner agrees that the prior art to Moritat teaches a *rigid* staple. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of LaPlace 2283814 and Schneider 3757629.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

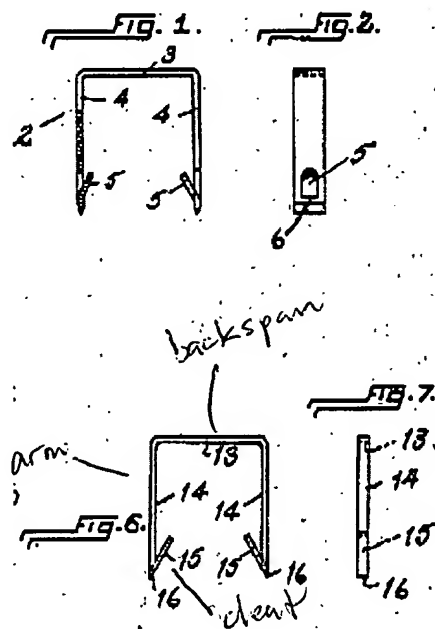
3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 10-12 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by LaPlace 2283814.
5. LaPlace teaches a staple comprising: a staple body including a pair of staple arms operably joined at a shoulder portion by a backspan, each arm further including an elbow portion having an inwardly projecting cleat, the staple arms, the inwardly projecting cleat and the backspan defining an internal tissue capture zone; an interior shoulder angle between 70-100 degrees in a first portion at an insertion time, the

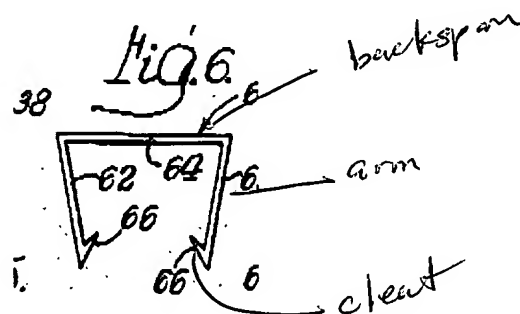
interior shoulder angle is capable of transition between 120-180 degrees in a second position when enough force is applied to pull the arms apart; wherein each elbow portion includes an interior elbow angle generally defined by the staple arm and the cleat, the elbow portion constructed so that the interior elbow angle is less than 70 degrees and is capable of transitioning to a maximum of 90 degrees when enough force is applied to pull the clear away from the arm; and wherein the staple is capable of having force applied to transition from one angle to the next at any time including the limitation of not less than 12 hours.



6. Claims 10-12 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schneider 3757629.
7. Schneider teaches a staple comprising: a staple body including a pair of staple arms operably joined at a shoulder portion by a backspan, each arm further including an elbow portion having an inwardly projecting cleat, the staple arms, the inwardly

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projecting cleat and the backspan defining an internal tissue capture zone; an interior shoulder angle between 70-100 degrees in a first portion at an insertion time, the interior shoulder angle is capable of transition between 120-180 degrees in a second position when enough force is applied to pull the arms apart (col. 3, lines 15-17); wherein each elbow portion includes an interior elbow angle generally defined by the staple arm and the cleat, the elbow portion constructed so that the interior elbow angle is less than 70 degrees and is capable of transitioning to a maximum of 90 degrees when enough force is applied to pull the clear away from the arm; and wherein the staple is capable of having force applied to transition from one angle to the next at any time including the limitation of not less than 12 hours.



Remarks

8. A recitation of the intended use (for use with living tissue) of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.
9. The recitation "bioabsorbable" has not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a

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structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

Contacts

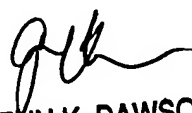
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael G. Mendoza whose telephone number is (571) 272-4698. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anh Tuan Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-44963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



MM



GLENN K. DAWSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER